

VZCZCXYZ0017
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIN #0359 0860956
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 270956Z MAR 09
FM AIT TAIPEI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1234
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 9068
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 0509

UNCLAS AIT TAIPEI 000359

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD - NIDA EMMONS
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused March 27 news coverage on the Pentagon's 2009 annual report on China's military power, which was released Wednesday; on Taiwan's economic prospects; and on the ongoing investigations into former President Chen Shui-bian and his family's legal cases. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" discussed the House of Representatives' recent move to pass a joint resolution defending Taiwan as well as the Pentagon's annual report on China's military power. The article lashed out at China for attempting to incite Washington to give up its support for Taiwan, and at the Ma Ying-jeou Administration for what it believes to be Ma's "pro-China" policy. End summary.

"Attach Great Importance to the Message Delivered When the United States Reiterates Its Support for the 'Taiwan Relations Act'"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 700,000] editorialized (3/27):

"... During the process when the House of Representatives discussed a joint resolution [reaffirming its support for the 'Taiwan Relations Act'], China manifestly sought to interfere by expressing hope that wordings such as one China, the three [Sino-U.S.] communiques, and the United States and China having formal diplomatic relations could be added to the resolution, and words such as security and arms sales to Taiwan could be removed. Yet China's scheme has failed to prevail after all. China's wishful thinking went like this: Since the United States is caught deeply in the financial storm, and it needs some assistance from China, Beijing can seize the opportunity to ask for anything it wants from Washington and take unfair advantage on the Taiwan issue. The fact is that Washington's long-term strategic concept for the Taiwan Strait far surpasses the short-term impact of the financial tsunami. China, as a result, flew into a rage over its failed attempt. ...

"... China continues to elevate its military threats against Taiwan and enacted the 'Anti-Secession Law,' stipulating that 'the nation will adopt non-peaceful means and other necessary measures' against Taiwan 'to safeguard the integrity of its sovereignty and national territory.' The move is in exact opposition to the 'Taiwan Relations Act,' and by no means will it be accepted by the United States. The U.S. Defense Department, as a result, reiterated that the United States, consistent with the 'Taiwan Relations Act,' will continue to make available weapons to enable Taiwan to defend itself.

"One can say that there are two ways by which China can annex Taiwan. First, [it can take advantage of] the complexity of the international situation, such as North Korea, Iraq, Iran and the war on terrorism. When the United States is likely to have a favor to ask of China, the latter can force Washington to make concessions on the Taiwan issue, particularly, to abolish the 'Taiwan Relations Act' (TRA) or at least to modify the TRA articles on arms sales to Taiwan. In that case, Taiwan will have no way to hide itself from the military shadow of China. Second, [Beijing] can take advantage of the timing of the pro-China force becoming the ruling party in

Taiwan to intensify its united front tactics against the island. In particular, Beijing can use some economic incentives to lure a few financial syndicates in Taiwan and strengthen its united front tactics by targeting central and southern Taiwan in an attempt to collapse the Taiwan people's national identity from inside and thus 'shape an irreversible trend for unification.' Judging from the developments since U.S. President Barack Obama took office, including the House joint resolution at this time, it will not be easy for China to incite the United States to give up its support for Taiwan. ..."

YOUNG